

honest willingness to learn the joy of giving according to the gospel law.

The home readings might profitably be used for topics for short talks this time.

#### GOSPEL GIVING

##### I. *The law of giving. Acts 20:35.*

Jesus gave us no laws about giving or anything else. He gives us *life* of a type which does the right thing without laws. Had he said "Give one-tenth on each first day of the week." I suppose we would be doing so, but he taught rather the blessedness of giving and of loving our neighbor as ourselves. If we learn this lesson we shall give one-tenth or more and give it regularly, not because commanded to do so but because we want to give. He who waits for scripture authority compelling him to give according to his ability has not yet learned Christ.

##### II. *System in giving. I Cor. 16:1, 2*

It strengthens a good impulse to be regular in acting upon it. The force of habit fixes it as a permanent element of character. It is astonishing too, how regular offerings will count up in the course of time. Boys and girls who spend their pennies and nickles every week for candy and gum might send the EVANGELIST to some poor family instead or have a nice sum for mission work.

##### III. *The reflex influence of giving. I Cor 9:12*

Notice the two results here:

1. Men have their needs supplied.
2. God is praised the more.

How do these results come from giving?

#### HINTS FOR TALKS AND TESTIMONIES

1. Small gifts are counted as large ones provided "there first be a willing mind." II Cor. 8:12.
2. But one with a willing mind first does his utmost.
3. The Christian gives himself with his gift.
4. The Christian does not blow a trumpet when giving, yet for the sake of encouraging others it is right that gifts should be reported.
5. Gifts should be adapted to the needs of the recipient.
6. Tolstoi, the Russian reformer, always fills his pockets with small change on going out from home that he may literally give to every man that asketh, but this care of the letter of the precept obscures the real teaching back of it. Sometimes the worst thing one can do for a man is to give him money. Jesus inspires a readiness to give, but common sense must help to guide the giving.

#### QUESTIONS

1. Can there be real giving without sacrifice?
2. Will we receive credit for giving that is done grudgingly?
3. What has God given to us?
4. Are our efforts to give a measure of our devotion to God?
5. Ought we study social needs in order to know how to give intelligently?
6. Will we realize all the blessings of giving in this world?
7. If giving is a burden rather than a joy how may it come to be a joy?
8. What are some worthy objects to which we should give?
9. As long as there is want and sin because the gospel is not fully preached have we a right to spend any money for mere pleasure?
10. How may we raise the standard of our giving?

O. F. YODER.

## Christian Life

### None Shall Pluck Me from Thy Hand

Clouds and darkness round about me  
For a season veil Thy face,  
Still I trust and cannot doubt Thee,  
Jesus, full of truth and grace;  
Resting on Thy word I stand,  
None can pluck me from Thy hand.

O, rebuke me not in anger!  
Suffer not my faith to fail!  
Let not pain, temptation, languor  
O'er my struggling heart prevail!  
Holding fast Thy word I stand,  
None shall pluck me from Thy hand.

In my heart Thy words I cherish,  
Thou unseen Thou still art near;  
Since Thy sheep shall never perish,  
What have I to do with fear?  
Trusting to Thy word I stand,  
None shall pluck me from Thy hand.

—Charlotte Elizabeth.



D. A. HOPKINS

### JESUS THE FRIEND OF SINNERS

*A sermon by D. A. Hopkins, Twelve Mile, Indiana.*  
*Text: This same Jesus. Acts 1:11.*

The word of God proclaims to all the world that Jesus is the sinner's friend. Every act of his self-sacrificing life was a living expression of the great truth that he loved us. As we read the gospel story we are touched by the deep compassion of the Savior and the tenderness of his love to us. He came so close to us and became so fully identified with us that he is touched with the feelings of our infirmities. Heb. 4:15. And when we are overwhelmed with grief, sorrow and pain and know there is no human friend that can understand our grief and give us sympathy and help, we may come with confidence to our redeemer and tell him that we know that he feels our infirmities and that he knows how to apply the healing balm to our aching hearts. Oh, what a sympathizing Savior. See him at Bethesda seeking for the lonely sufferer who said, I have no man when the water is touched to put me into the pool, but while I am coming another steps forth down before me. The active throbbing power of life was in the words that the great physician

spoke, Arise, take up thy bed and walk. Notice, why does he pass by all others and search out this poor, friendless one. Oh, it is because he has so closely united himself with humanity that he feels our weakness and distress.

How tender a Savior's love. The same Jesus. On another occasion we find him at the tomb of Lazarus. About him are the sorrowing sisters and their friends, as they have come to comfort them. He feels the grief that rends their sad hearts and not only their affliction but pressing upon his soul of love is all the sadness of sin and death, down the ages to come, and in this sorrowing and solemn assembly the record says Jesus wept. John 11:13. What a universe of meaning to us now as well as to them is summed up in the two short words. Is it any wonder those standing by said, Behold how he loved him, and well may we all join in saying that God commendeth his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Rom. 5:8. And so we might follow the blessed Master all thru his precious and devoted life, and always do we find him mingling with the people, sharing their joys, soothing their sorrows, relieving their distresses, healing their sick. This same Jesus. He gave himself without any reserve to poor fallen humanity, the great object of his love, and this great love was not quenched when cruel hands and sin hardened hearts were mercilessly torturing him on the cross. Even there in all his pain and suffering he poured out his soul in prayer, Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.

Then what a thrill of joy must come to us as we read the precious words, This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye see him go. He is the same Jesus, the same compassionate Savior, the same one who hath borne our grief, and carried our sorrows, he who was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities, and with whose stripes we are healed. How this good news should cause our hearts to overflow with joy. I turn again to my text and I read, This same Jesus shall come again in like manner as ye see him go. When they saw him go he was that same personal Jesus with whom they had associated and whom they had loved and adored both as their dearest companion and Savior, and in like manner will he return. He comes as the same personal friend to all who will accept him. The apostle Paul says, The Lord of glory himself shall descend from heaven with a shout with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God and the dead in Christ shall rise first. I Thes. 4:16 The Lord himself is coming. He returns to earth with a triumphant shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, and then, standing not at the tomb of Lazarus only or beside the bearers of the widow's son, but in the presence of all the chambers of death in which his people are awaiting